

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3–8 and 11–20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended and claim 10 is canceled. Support for the amendment to claim 1 can be found, for example, in canceled claim 10. No new matter is added. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt allowance at least in view of the following remarks.

Applicant appreciates the rejoinder of claim 17.

Claims 16, 18 and 19 were withdrawn from further consideration as having been drawn to a non-elected species. Applicant requests rejoinder of non-elected claims 16, 18 and 19 upon allowance of independent claim 1, as claim 1 remains generic to claims 16, 18 and 19. It should be noted that claim 1 requires no material element additional to those required by the species claims, and each of the species claims require all the limitations of claim 1, therefore claim 1 is **generic** to claims 16, 18 and 19. Accordingly, Applicant requests rejoinder of claims 16, 18 and 19 (see MPEP §821.04).

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 17 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,785,308 (Flores); rejects claims 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 17 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Flores in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,534,252 (Harrington); rejects claims 4 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Flores; rejects claims 4 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Flores in view of Harrington; rejects claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Flores in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,915,802 (Siler); and rejects claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Flores in view of Harrington in further view of Siler. The Office Action objects to claims 10, 12, 14 and 15 as depending upon a rejected base claim but notes the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 10, 12, 14 and 15 contain allowable subject matter.

Applicant amends claim 1 by incorporating the allowable features of claim 10. As the Office Action notes that claim 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim, claim 1 is allowable. In addition, claims 3-8 and 11-20 are patentable, at least in view of the patentability of claim 1, from which they variously depend, as well as for the additional features they recite. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections and objection.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3-8 and 11-20 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


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